



# The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society's **EXCITER**

## GET INVOLVED

- RARS General Membership meeting: Second Tuesday of the month.
- The RARS net meets every night except Saturday @ 8 p.m. on 146.640.
- The RARS Technical & Trader's net: Saturdays @ 8:00 p.m. in place of the RARS net.
- RARS meets for a monthly dinner on the First Tuesday of each month.

## 2014 PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS

Quintiles Wrightsville Beach Full & Half Marathon: Mar. 16

MS Spring Fling: Apr. 5

MS Triangle Walk: Apr. 5

RARSFEST: Apr. 19

NC TOUR de CURE: May 17-18

Special Olympics NC Summer Games 2014: May 30-31

MS Ice Cream Ride: June 21

Firecracker 50/100K: July 4

Velo4Yellow: July 19

Cup 'n' Cone Tour: July 26

Blue Ridge Breakaway: Aug. 16

Bike MS New Bern: Sep. 5-6

PPD Beach 2 Battleship Triathlon: Oct. 25

Interested in helping? Visit <http://www.rars.org/public-service.php> for more information.

## RARS General Meeting

**What:** Awards, Birthday Party & RARSfest Update  
*by John Snellen AI4RT*

**Date:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014

**Time:** Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

*Informal gathering and refreshments from 7-7:30*

**Where:** Ridge Road Baptist Church, 2011 Ridge Rd., Raleigh



*Have an idea for a meeting? Email the RARS Vice President!*

## 42nd Annual

# RARSFest 2014

ARRL Roanoke Division Convention

Saturday, April 19, 2014

2014 Theme: ARRL Centennial

*Special Guest: ARRL President Kay Craigie N3KN*



Jim Graham Building, NC State Fairgrounds

1025 Blue Ridge Rd, Raleigh NC 27607

Latitude: 35.7936 Longitude: -78.71175; Talk in 146.64

**Tickets:** \$8 advance, age 16 and under **free**

**Order tickets online at [www.rars.org/hamfest](http://www.rars.org/hamfest)**

## RARS Officers

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## The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the amateur radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, the society incorporated a new RARS and obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friendship through amateur radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic needs; to educate members in radio technique, and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining amateur radio licenses.

Anyone interested in amateur radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12 per year. Dues for non-licensed associate members are \$9 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer or on the RARS website ([www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)).



## Exciter

The *Exciter* is the official newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It appears each month as a PDF on the RARS website at [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org). Members receive email notification when the latest version is available. Please provide your email address to the Treasurer.

The *Exciter* welcomes articles, advertisements, and other contributions. To submit a piece to the newsletter, please contact the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit any and all pieces. The submission deadline for each month's *Exciter* is the third Friday of the preceding month. All submissions must be final. Drafts are not accepted.

The views expressed in the *Exciter* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or RARS.

Cathy Downs, KA3QPU, editor ([editor@rars.org](mailto:editor@rars.org))

## For Your Information

### RARS General Meeting

**Date:** **Second** Tuesday of each month

**Location:** Ridge Road Baptist Church

2011 Ridge Road  
Raleigh, NC, 27607

**Time:** People begin arriving at 7 p.m.  
The meeting officially begins at  
7:30 p.m.

### RARS Monthly Dinner

Join us on the **first** Tuesday of each month for the RARS dinner. It's open to everyone: RARS members, non-members, friends, and family. Feel free to bring your little ones! Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m.

Listen to the nightly RARS net and check [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for details on the next dinner's location.

### RARS Repeaters in Raleigh

146.640 & 443.625 (88.5 PL)

Join us for the nightly RARS net at 8 p.m. on the 146.640 repeater. All hams holding a Technician class license or higher are invited to check in. We welcome both RARS and non-RARS members to the net.

### VE Testing

The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing in May, August and November (location to be announced); the RARSFest in April; the Cary Swapfest in July; the JARSFest in November; and following RARS license classes.

Please bring a photo ID, your current license, a copy of your current license, your \$14 exam fee, and any CSCEs you have for credit. Visit [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for more information.

## Message from the President

Hello to all! I have a favor to ask of you. Yes, if you are reading this, I am asking for your help. Would you please sign up to help during RARSFest? Each year, a dedicated few offer to lead teams to ensure that RARSFest is the best hamfest in the southeast.

These dedicated few make themselves available all day the Friday before RARSFest. They work hard all day, eat a well-deserved meal Friday night, then return by 6:00 a.m. Saturday morning in preparation for an 8:00 a.m. start time.

On behalf of the dedicated workers who put in two full days, could you please support your club for two hours? RARSFest is more than a bargain hunter's paradise, it is a chance to be part of the RARS community. When we support RARSFest we are supporting each other. The proceeds are used to support amateur radio efforts from which we all benefit. Please, please, please, share a small amount of time. You will be glad that you did. Thank you.

73,  
CJ, NC4CJ

### January Traffic Stats

#### RARS Two Meter Traffic/ Ragchew Net

Check-ins: 496  
Traffic: 30/28  
Minutes: 490  
Sessions: 27

#### Special Interest Nets

Check-ins: 140  
Minutes: 340  
Sessions: 9

### February Traffic Stats

#### RARS Two Meter Traffic/ Ragchew Net

Check-ins: 475  
Traffic: 33/29  
Minutes: 420  
Sessions: 24

#### Special Interest Nets

Check-ins: 125  
Minutes: 310  
Sessions: 8

## 2014 Meeting Topics

### Awards, Birthday Party & RARSfest Update

John Snellen AI4RT.....Mar. 11

### CBS Radio NEWS Technical Presentation

Jim Krasula.....Apr. 8

### "VU7AG Lakshadweep Island 2003

#### DXpedition"

Krish Kanakasapapathi W4VKU.....May 13

Field Day.....Jun. 10

### Wireless Research Center & Antenna Design

Gerald Hayes, KE4QBT.....Jul 8

### Email without the Internet - Winlink 2000

Frank Pleshe N3FRP.....Aug. 12

### What is Electromagnetic Compatibility and Why is it Important?

Alan Knight AA4FU.....Sep. 9

Elections; Presentation TBD.....Nov. 11

Holiday Party.....Dec. 9

*Titles, topics, and speakers subject to change.  
More information will be added throughout the  
year when it become available.*

## 2014 Hamfests & Conventions

### 2014 Raleigh Hamfest & ARRL Roanoke Division Convention | Apr. 19, 2014

Location: Raleigh, NC

Website: <http://www.rars.org/hamfest>

### 24th Annual Down East Hamfest | May 3

Location: Kinston, NC

Website: <http://www.downeasthamfest.org>

### 10th Annual Rockingham County Swapfest | May 10

Location: Reidsville, NC

Website: <http://www.rcarc.com>

### DurHamFest | May 24

Location: Bahama, NC

Website: <http://dfma.org>

### Winston-Salem Classic Hamfest | June 7

Location: Winston-Salem, NC

Website: <http://www.w4nc.com>

## New RARS Members

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Chester Williamson | KK4YAP |
| Mike Williamson    | KK4YAQ |
| Carolyn deCourt    | KK4VUV |

## March Birthdays

|         |        |       |
|---------|--------|-------|
| Marty   | W4MY   | 03/02 |
| Barbara | KK4TLY | 03/02 |
| Robert  | KI4MMT | 03/05 |
| Karl    | W4CHX  | 03/06 |
| Noble   | N4UOQ  | 03/06 |
| Sharon  | KD4ACK | 03/06 |
| Bill    | K4BUX  | 03/06 |
| Rich    | KR4AS  | 03/08 |
| Steve   | KA9MVA | 03/09 |
| Jim     | WA5APR | 03/10 |
| Bob     | WA4ZZN | 03/12 |
| David   | KF4VXJ | 03/12 |
| Pam     | KK4IPN | 03/13 |
| Tom     | KJ4ULP | 03/14 |
| Larry   | K4LXV  | 03/17 |
| Eddie   | WK4I   | 03/18 |
| Fred    | KJ4RGB | 03/19 |
| Bill    | K4WGE  | 03/20 |
| Carl    | W4HJZ  | 03/23 |
| Greg    | KE4PAX | 03/23 |
| Bill    | K4HVVH | 03/27 |
| Alan    | KK4HUX | 03/30 |
| Zack    | W4ZWA  | 03/31 |

### 29th Annual Firecracker Hamfest | July 12

Location: Salisbury, NC

Website: <http://www.rowanars.org>

### Mid-Summer Swapfest| July 20

Location: Cary, NC

Website: <http://www.qsl.net/n4nc>

### North Carolina State Convention (Shelby Hamfest) | Aug. 30

Location: Shelby, NC

Website: <http://www.shelbyhamfest.org>

## How Ham Radio Got Me a Job

By Howard A. Goodman, N4KYW

**T**his incident occurred in early 2006, but I remember the details vividly. For the past 15 years I've worked as a contract professional, serving many clients without actually working as a direct employee. I've even written a book about this career.

Professional contracting is a migratory form of work life. Contracts can range in length anywhere from three to six months to multiple years; I've experienced all durations. Then it's on to the next client. I've even worked as a contractor for a client who was previously my full-time employer. But in February 2006, I found myself at the end of a contract and no solid prospects for a new one.

Now, when it comes to amateur radio, I admit I'm much more of a listener than a talker. And so

with not much to do but try to look for another contract engagement, I happened to be tuned to the 64 repeater, when I heard a QSO between Jose, KD4JWF, and another ham.

I listened casually, with little or no particular interest, until Jose mentioned that he was a corporate recruiter. And that was the exact moment my ears sprang to attention!

[www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)



I waited politely until Jose had concluded his QSO and then gave him a call. But he must have already gone QRT,

because he didn't respond. This left me with the dilemma of knowing who he was but not having any way of reaching him.

That's when I turned to the FCC's Universal Licensing System. With Jose's call sign in hand I was easily able to obtain his mailing address.

So I contacted him the old-fashioned way—I wrote him a letter, explaining that I was a contract professional in need of a job, and I provided him with several points of contact, including my phone number.

Two days later Jose called to tell me a client of his happened to have a technical writer position that needed to be

filled. By the following afternoon I was down at his office on

Fayetteville Street, signing the contract.

By the following Monday I was reporting for work. The job turned out to be a meaningful three-month assignment, my first contract job in downtown Raleigh. During that time I became reacquainted with a pleasant childhood experience of using public transit.

*I continue to believe that amateur radio is more than a hobby, rather a form of what today we call networking.*

## 2014 License Courses

Many thanks go to Murray Merner, K4MHM, for organizing these license classes. If you're interested in upgrading your ticket or know someone who wants to join in the fun of amateur radio, please contact Murray at [mmmm0320@gmail.com](mailto:mmmm0320@gmail.com).

**Technician Course (3 days)**  
**Mar. 29, Apr. 5, 12**

**General Course (3 days)**  
**Jul. 19, 26, Aug. 2**

**Extra Course (5 days)**  
**Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1**

**Technician Course (3 days)**  
**Nov. 15, 22, 29**

*With Thanksgiving on Nov. 26, we may adjust and have the last session on Dec. 6.*



Locations have not yet been arranged. Times are usually 8:00

a.m. to 12:30 p.m. An exam session is usually scheduled in the afternoon of the last course session. All details will be provided prior to the course start date.

Some may argue it was the FCC-ULS online database that was the enabler. But I maintain that without amateur radio I never would have known about FCC-ULS in the first place. I continue to believe that amateur radio is more than a hobby, rather a form of what today we call networking. And it was this early form of networking that helped land me a job.

By the way, I happen to be looking for a job now.





*Photo courtesy of RARS.org*

## OPERATING TIPS: How to Check into a Net

By  
**Cliff Broughton,  
W4FT**

*In this article, Cliff shares some tips and ideas on how to make nets more efficient. As he explains in his editorial, these are just his opinions. If other club members or net control operators have other ideas or suggestions, feel free to write an article or editorial comment for future issues of the Exciter.*

**H**ow did you learn how to check into a net? By listening to others? Did someone actually teach you? Did you read about it somewhere? Do you even know?

Almost every net has its own preferred way to check in, and then there are always people who check in some other way. How do you know what is the right way to check into a net?

For years, I've listened to people checking into various nets, including the RARS 8 p.m. ragchew nets, and I'm hearing operators picking up more and more bad habits. Mostly, it's not the op's fault because somewhere along the way, we, as an organization, have pretty much stopped teaching the difference

between good and bad operating practices. Also, we rarely correct bad operating practices for fear of offending people or being labeled as "kilocycle cops" or something worse.

So, in an effort to educate, here is some advice from a former RARS net manager on checking in to a net.

### **Listen First!**

Listening is the most important thing you can do! Before you reach for that microphone, stop and listen. Every net has its preferred method of checking in. In almost every case, the net control operator will describe the check-in procedure. For HF nets, they may want you to just throw out your suffix once, and they'll

come back and get your full call later. Others may call for check-ins by number in your call. Still others may call for mobiles and then all others. Many will ask for emergency or priority traffic first.

Listen to the net control op and follow their instructions over anything you may have learned or read elsewhere.

### **It's Not a Race. Slow Down!**

OK, the net control op has called for check-ins and it's time for you to check into the net. Don't be the op who keys up milliseconds after net control un-keys. Wait a second or two. If the net is on a repeater, maybe wait for the repeater to drop.

See **Net Ops**, p. 7

Many operators will key up immediately after the net op stops talking. What do you get then? Doubles, triples, and pileups, and nobody gets through. Well, not very efficiently. Net Control asks for fills and rechecks, which take two or three times longer than needed. I've seen this a lot in public service nets, as well as the RARS ragchew nets.

Here's a better reason to wait a few seconds. If anyone has emergency or priority traffic, they *should* key up as soon as they can! When the speed demons key up just to be first to check in, the emergency and priority traffic gets blocked.

By waiting a bit, you give folks with priority traffic the chance to get through. This actually happens a lot on public service events—ops with normal traffic try to call net control as soon as he unkeys during a net while at the same time, someone with priority traffic is doubling with him. So, just be patient and let the check in be a nice, orderly process.

Not only should you be slow to key up, you should *speak slowly*. A bunch of people are trying to check in and there's one harried net control op trying to write everything down. "What was that call sign? Did they give a name? Were they mobile? Are they checked in or just in and out?"

Give that frustrated net op a

## So Why Did I Write this article?

*By Cliff Broughton, W4FT*

Our net scripts say, in part, "...while providing a place to learn and practice good net skills," but it doesn't say anything about *teaching* those good net skills. We need to do a better job of teaching and passing along these good net skills and good operating practices in general, because we have more and more new hams joining our ranks. They're hungry to get these skills, but often don't know where to get them, and don't know what they might be doing right or wrong! A lot of these skills are learned by observation and repetition. When seasoned operators pick up bad habits, new ops pick them up by observation, not knowing any better.

You think I'm wrong in this article? Great. Write a response for the *Exciter*! I can't wait to see it! I don't claim to be an expert. If you know a better way, let's hear it! It's time to share the good skills and to start actually teaching what the best practices are and to teach which bad practices ought to be avoided.

In this spirit, I challenge everyone to find a practice, good or bad, that you are seeing, and write a short article about it for the *Exciter*! Don't point fingers, but give examples showing what is good, what is bad, and how to do it right! Let's start teaching each other to be better operators. Maybe we can get a bunch of club members nominated to the ARRL A-1 Operator's club someday!

break and speak clearly, at a normal pace. He probably can't write as fast as you can talk. And if he's trying to think about it, well, let's just hope he isn't trying to chew gum, too.

### OK, So How Do We Check into a RARS Net?

Good question. If you listen to the nets, different net control ops are using different scripts because they have been edited over time. There are some inconsistencies among all the scripts, and some things have

fallen by the wayside (by accident, I suspect). So, as a former RARS net manager, I'll give you the highlights and some of the finer points.

When checking into a RARS net, follow these steps:

#### 1. Listen

Listen to the net control op for instructions and for which group of callsigns is to check in. Sometimes, they will call for emergency or priority traffic first, although this seems to have gone by the

wayside. Next, possibly a call for stations with traffic, traffic instructors, or ops wanting traffic training. Some net ops will first call for mobile stations only, another step that is seen less and less often. Finally, the normal call for stations with suffixes A through N and then O through Z. Wait for your group. If you miss your group, they'll almost always call for any station soon.

## 2. Check-in

For every RARS net, the procedure is the same at this point. The script reads something like this: "To check in, call net control [insert net control's callsign here]. **Pause to check for doubling**, then give your callsign, name, whether you're mobile, if you're in or out, and if you have any traffic or announcements."

When your group is called, check in using these steps:

### a.) **Wait a moment or so.**

Remember, it is not a race. Don't cause a pileup. You don't have to wait a long time, just wait for something that feels right.

b.) **Key up and give net control ops' call.** If you heard someone else keying as you keyed, think about waiting for them to check in. Remember, two signals at the same time often results in both losing.

c.) **Un-Key and see if you've doubled.** If someone else is still talking, you and the other station doubled. Best practice is to let them finish their check-in because they didn't hear you, don't know they doubled, and net control is trying to sort it out. If you don't wait, you'll both just double again. You can go next. By the way, if you hear two or more stations double, stand by until they are all checked in. It'll go a lot more smoothly for everyone if you wait.

### d.) **Complete your check-in.**

Once you're sure you're not doubling, key up again and, *at a normal conversational speed*, give your callsign (phonetically, if the net control requests it), name, general location, whether you have traffic, whether you're mobile, and if you're in or in and out.

e.) **Listen for confirmation of your check-in.** If net control asks for a fill, respond.

### **Check for Doubling!**

When you check in, do you remember to **unkey and check for doubling**? Lately, we've had more and more ops who key up and start talking. I've heard it for myself, and I've heard about it from net ops. They throw out a long continuous stream like "Net Control, this is WA4AVU, Don in Cary, mobile, please check

me in and out, thanks," and then they're gone. They didn't leave one break in that to check for doubling.

Sometimes, they don't even hang around to see if they're acknowledged, or if net control needs a fill. In the meantime, three other stations checking in at the same time doubled with him, and net control got them only if he's really good and really lucky!

## **An Example**

For almost **every** net, whether RARS or not, you start by keying, saying the net control op's call, or perhaps "Here is" (just those two words, common on HF) and un-key to check for a double. Did you forget net control's callsign? For RARS nets, just say "Net Control" instead of their call. On HF, "Here is" or "Net Control" works too.

So, just to be thorough, here's an example of how we used to do it, back in the day.

Let's say that Doug, AD4UL (he was my predecessor as net manager—he was also a good Elmer on net procedures) is the net op, and I want to check in. After he gives the opening script, announcements and remarks, this would transpire:

AD4UL: I'll now take check-ins from stations with emergency or priority traffic.



**Net Ops**, continued from p. 8

AD4UL: Hearing none, I'll now take check-ins from mobile stations so that we can get right back to you before you get where you're going.

*Mobile stations check in.*

AD4UL: Net control recognizes the following mobile stations... (stations are listed by call and name)

AD4UL: I'll now take check-ins from stations with suffixes Alpha through November. Please call net control.

*After a short pause to let the repeater drop, I check in.*

W4FT: Net Control, (unkey and check for doubling)

W4FT: Here is W4FT, Cliff, west Raleigh, no traffic, good evening.

*Other stations check in.*

AD4UL: Net recognizes W4FT Cliff (and the list of other stations)

It really is simple to check in to a net properly. Just listen for instructions, don't be in a hurry, pause to check for doubling, and speak normally.

Could it be any easier?

## An Odyssey and a Milestone

by Brian Young, KA9QJT

**O**n Saturday, March 1, a fantastic group of 18 Hams said, "Meh," to meteorologists' suggestion of possible early morning freezing rain and headed for Chapel Hill, along with a whole bunch of students, family members and coaches. Yes, it was time for the annual Eastern Region Odyssey of the Mind tournament at Chapel Hill High School, Smith Middle School, and Seawell Elementary School campuses. The formula's the same each year, but the event grows every year. Student teams from primary grades (K-2) through high school present their solution to a "thinking" problem they've

created in advance. They also tackle a mystery part of the competition called "Spontaneous" where they do not know the nature of the problem they'll be solving as a team...until they enter the room.

This year's Odyssey of the Mind problems had names such as "Driver's Test," "The Not-So-Haunted-House," "It's How We Rule," "The Stackable Structure," "Seeing is "Believing," and for the little ones, "The World's First Arts Festival."

I saw a few entries being carried and rolled in for the

"Driver's Test" problem at the High School. Many had wheels and various forms of propulsion like electric motors. I'd heard, but couldn't confirm, that one student team showed up

with a working hovercraft. Sweet! I hope their presentation to the judges went as well as their technical solution

seemed to suggest.

Hams assisting with Odyssey of the Mind tournaments find themselves assigned to specific performance locations spread between the three



NC Ham Public Service Photo  
John, K3RHJ, working the elementary school information table.

See **Odyssey**, p.10

schools. In some cases, hams shadow Odyssey of the Mind officials like the Tournament Director and sometimes the individual problem

captains. Over the years, we've also found it very helpful to assign hams to the information/registration desks at the three schools to handle team registration questions and the occasional question, "How do we find the custodian? They are out of toilet tissue in the ladies restroom." This year, we managed to secure some spare radios from custodial staff in order to locate them when necessary.

Everyone works together with Net Control to pass tournament and logistical communications to and from the officials and the various performance locations.

Dan Sears, KD4AGQ, our Net Control again this year, located his communications trailer at Seawell Elementary School. His setup, along with a 10W crossband repeater I located in one of the more centrally-located parking lots



NC Ham Public Service Photo  
*Al, KE4IHX, kept the high school information desk running smoothly.*

near the high school, seemed to keep everyone in pretty good contact with their HTs, even if there was the need for the

occasional relay from a remote room in one of the buildings.

As performances ended, some of our hams took care of last-minute communications regarding their assigned problems before heading for home. This was necessary to make sure that all team scores were turned in to the Score Room and that any scoring questions were answered. Dick Orander,

KD4ISC, almost escaped twice before everything was settled with the Score Room for the problem he was assigned.

The scoring activities have been honed over the last couple of years to the point that everything went very well

towards the end of the day and no hams were needed to help with award ceremony communications again this year. In the past, a few hams have stayed to the very end to help relay school names for each team to the master of ceremonies welcoming them into the gymnasium to receive their awards.

With this year's tournament behind us, I'd like to thank the following hams for their dedication to the success of this event: Dan Sears,

KD4AGQ; Paul Lukosuis, N9PL; Al Nickle, KE4IHX; John Stone, K3RHJ; Ray Albers, K2HYD; Michael Thurman, KB7NLA; Kenn Kubacki, KK4OSI; Charles Galloway, W4DBI; Wade Gutreuter, KK4BVR; Chris McCormick,

N3JHR; Phil Cunningham, AE4PC; Larry Holt, KG4FIQ; Tana Wooten, KB3UTX; Dick Orander, KD4ISC; Nathan Adams, K4YNA; Mike Eckhardt, KK4ETS; and not to be forgotten, John Snellen, AI4RT.



NC Ham Public Service Photo  
*The crossband repeater's antenna got a well-deserved lift this year.*

See **Odyssey**, p. 11





NC Ham Public Service Photo

*John technically received his 100th event award from Brian Young, KA9QJT, before he worked this year's Odyssey of the Mind regional competition, but that's okay. The award is well-deserved!*

Speaking of John Snellen, not many knew that he reached a very important milestone on March 1. No, it wasn't yet another birthday. This year's Odyssey of the Mind tournament was the 100th public service event John has participated in! Thank you to Dan Sears for counting (and counting again) all the stars below John's callsign on the RARS Public Service Points webpage. We were able to pull off an early morning sneak attack on John during the pre-event briefing, which included the presentation of a special plaque thanking him for his efforts. Thank you John, for all you do for ham radio public service! I personally hope you'll continue to lead the charge for many years to come.

Thanks again to all who helped me with the Odyssey of

[www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)



*At left, John's still smiling after 100 (okay, 99) events.*

*Below, Chris, N3HJR, took over Net Control in the comms trailer while Dan, KD4AGQ, enjoyed a break.*

Photos courtesy of NC Ham Public Service.

the Mind regional tournament again this year.

Coordinating this event gets easier with each passing year—a tribute to the great volunteers who make it possible.



*No, it wasn't John's birthday, but it **was** his 100th public service event!*



*Top: Funny hats are encouraged, as this group of judges demonstrate over lunch.*

*Above: Michael, KB7NLA, keeps the Score Room well-connected.*

Photos courtesy of  
NC Ham Public Service

# Minutes

## General Membership Meeting Raleigh Amateur Radio Society February 11, 2014

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1. **Call to order:** C.J. NC4CJ called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. There were 48 people in attendance.
2. **Guests:** C.J. NC4CJ introduced our guests at the meeting.
  - a. Mike KK4YAQ
  - b. Chester KK4YAP
  - c. Ken KK4YAF
3. **Approval of minutes:** The Minutes of the RARS General Membership meeting on January 15, 2014, were approved.
4. **Vice President's report (Tom N4TL):** Deferred to end of Program.
5. **Secretary's report (Bob K4YXM):** no report
6. **Treasurer's report (Greg KE4PAX):** Greg KE4PAX reported that RARS has 314 members. If any RARS member has any questions, please contact Greg KE4PAX or C.J. NC4CJ for further information.
7. **Door Prizes:** Winners were Dennis NC4DK and Jerry KE4TTS.
8. **Announcements:**
  - a. **Upcoming RARS events and hamfests:** C.J. NC4CJ reminded everyone to see the Exciter or the ARRL website for further information.
  - b. The after meeting get together will be at Applebee's on Hillsborough Street.
9. **Reports from RARS Board members and others:**
  - a. **President's message (CJ NC4CJ):** This month promises to delight us as we settle in to watch the 2014 Winter Olympics. Only one thing could make the Olympics better. How about a small contest to see how many RARS members can make one or more contacts to the events in Socchi, Russia? I have located a website which was put together by a very dedicated ham. <https://sites.google.com/site/9a7pjt/ham-radio-news/diplomaolympicgamessochi2014>. Help us to bring a little Socchi to Raleigh!



- b. **NCQP:** Joanne AK4RJ that Feb 24 is the date of the NCPQ. N4RAL will be the club station and will be located in Franklin County.
- c. **SKYWARN Virginia (NC4VA):** Virginia stated that SKYWARN will be activated tomorrow. The National Weather Service is predicting a crippling storm.

10. **Any other business:** None.

11. **Program.** Tom N4TL introduced Doug Hall K4DSP who presented a program on spectrum analyzers. Doug K4DSP has been a ham for 39 years. He is active on all bands/modes and prefers CW. He loves to homebrew. He graduated from NC State University with a B.S. in electrical and computer engineering and has worked in the technology field for over 30 years.

He has been involved in three startup companies including one that sold products into the amateur radio market, and is currently developing products for the public safety communications industry. He designed the hardware and wrote the software for all of the JPS Communications DSP amateur radio products.

Doug wrote the article “The FSKit—A Simple Sound Card Interface for Generating Radio Teletype Frequency Shift Keying” that appeared in the August 2011 issue of *QST*. He received the “QST Cover Plaque Award” for having the top article for the month.

12. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.

## QCWA 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Luncheon

*All Seasoned Hams Invited...*

*By Chuck Littlewood, K4HF*

The Quarterly Century Wireless Association Piedmont Chapter 126 will hold its first quarter luncheon meeting March 15 at 10:30 a.m. at McCall's BBQ and Seafood Restaurant in Clayton, N.C. **All members and guests** are welcome.

Our guest speaker will be Nick England, K4NYW, of Chapel Hill, who will present a program on “Navy Radio Equipment.”

More info on our organization is available at [www.qcwa.org](http://www.qcwa.org) and for the local Piedmont



Chapter, [www.qsl.net/qcwa126](http://www.qsl.net/qcwa126). Local Raleigh contacts are Chuck, K4HF; Charlie, WB4DCM; and several other RARS Members.

The phone number for McCall's BBQ is 919-550 3877, and the website is [www.mccallsbbq.com](http://www.mccallsbbq.com), where further details and a link to map directions are located.

Hope to see you there!

# Minutes

## Board of Directors Meeting Raleigh Amateur Radio Society January 27, 2014

*Since the January Board of Directors meeting minutes are now officially approved, I've included them again in the March issue of the Exciter. --Editor*

**Members Present:** CJ NC4CJ; John AI4RT; Chuck K4HF; Greg KE4PAX; Tom N4TL; Bill AK4BL; Joanne AK4RJ; Joe WA4GIR

**Guest:** Alan AB4OZ

**Apologies:** Hank K4HM, Jack N6UYB, Don WA4AVU; Bob Chew, K4YXM, Karl W4CHX

1. **Call to order (CJ NC4CJ):** CJ NC4CJ called the meeting to order at 8:20 PM. CJ will forward minutes for the January 27, 2014, Board for review since Bob is not present. CJ apologized for the sudden shift from the scheduled date of January 28, 2014 to January 27<sup>th</sup>. The change was due to an approaching snow storm. The Board of Directors meeting was held immediately after the RARSFest meeting.
2. **Approval of minutes (CJ NC4CJ):** The Minutes of the previous Board Meeting (November 19, 2013) were approved as corrected.
3. **Vice President's report (Tom N4TL):** Tom provided a nearly completed list of guest speakers for 2014. Tom will forward the list on to Hank for placement on the web page.
4. **Treasurer's report (Greg KE4PAX):** RARS currently has 314 members. Southeastern Repeater Association (SERA) dues have been paid. Advertisement for RARSFest, April 19, 2014, has not been paid for. RARS sent \$400.00 to the Raleigh Lions Club to support their Holiday outreach to the blind community. If any RARS member has questions regarding the budget, please contact Greg KE4PAX or C.J. NC4CJ for more information.

Joanne AK4RJ suggested that RARS use [CaféPress](#) for future tee shirt orders. Apparently they can accept individual orders under an umbrella organization. Each person can pay for their merchandise online and then CaféPress will ship the item directly to the purchaser. RARS would need to supply the artwork. In 2013, RARS purchased the tee shirts from [CustomInk](#). Tee-shirt purchases for Field day 2014 can be discussed with Dennis NC4DK during a future board meeting.

5. **Secretary's report (Bob K4YXM):** No report
6. **Committee reports:**
  - a. **Public Service Director (John AI4RT):** The First event is on March 1<sup>st</sup> and supports Odyssey of the mind. A complete list of [public service events](#) is available from the RARS website.
  - b. **Public Information Officer (vacant):** No report
  - c. **Education Director (Murray K4MHM):** No report
  - d. **Field Day Chair (Dennis NC4DK):** No report
  - e. **FM Repeater Chair (Karl W4CHX):** No report
  - f. **RARSFest Chair (John AI4RT):** Planning is proceeding
  - g. **Exciter Chair (Cathy KA3QPU):** No report

- h. **ARRL Liaison (Chuck K4HF):** The ARRL big event is the [Centennial Program](#) from July 17-19, 2014 is a yearlong QSO party for the United States. Each state/territory will host W1AW for during two separate weeks of the year. All events can be reviewed on the ARRL Centennial webpage at <http://www.arrl.org/centennial>.
- i. **Food Service Chair (Joanne AK4RJ):** No report
- j. **Net Manager (Mary KG4OQA):** No report
- k. **W4DW/W4RNC Trustee (Jeff AC4ZO):** No report
- l. **Hospitality Team and Directors at Large**
  - a. **Don WA4AVU:** No report
  - b. **Bill AK4BL:** A portable sign is needed to direct people to the news RARS meeting room. Joe could make two, one for the outside with a directional arrow and one for just inside the door. The signs can be attached to cones.  
Directors-at-Large could take turns
    - a. Sit at table to ensure visitors in particular are met
    - b. The other Directors at Large could circulate and shake hands
    - c. Greg will send membership applications to Bill for new members
  - c. **Jack N6UYB:** no report. Jack has returned to Rex Hospital for more surgery in early February and the Board wishes him a good recovery.
- m. **RARS VE Coordinators (Joe WA4GIR and Liz KO4CK):** Joe and Liz have been giving the license exams once a quarter during the General Meeting time which was on the first Tuesday of the months of February, May, August and November. Now that the meeting has been changed to the second Tuesday, they cannot give exams then so they wish to continue to offer them four times a year as they have been doing. The next schedule exam session was scheduled for February 4 and that will be cancelled, but they would like to conduct exam sessions on May 6, August 5, and November 4, 2014. Joe and Liz would like to conduct the exams at Ridge Road Baptist Church. CJ will contact Hollie about using a smaller space on those dates. Hank needs to know for sure if VE testing will be actually held on those dates to update the web site. Exam dates in conjunction with the license courses are on an *ad hoc* basis and are usually at the course site so they are not affected by this situation.
- n. **RARS Webmaster (Hank K4HM):** No report
- o. **North Carolina QSO Party (Marty W4MY):** Joanne stated that all of the awards are sponsored and paid for.

7. **Old business:**

- a. **Equipment list for insurance policy (Greg KE4PAX):** CJ will send a reminder to Karl W4CHX to gather the information necessary to insure RARS equipment
- b. **Amateur radio and the new Unified Development Ordinance (Karl W4CHX):** no report
- c. **Publicity for licensing classes and VE exams (Murray K4MHM):** Joe had placed the VE test dates on the ARRL website. The information will be removed until the testing schedule is settled.
- d. **ICS courses (Karl W4CHX):** no report

8. **New business:**

- a. CJ will check with Hollie to see if third week board of Director meeting which can hold 20-25 individuals.

9. **Adjournment (CJ NC4CJ):** The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

## LOCAL AMATEUR RADIO NETS

The **Apex Emergency Response Communications Net** meets weekly each Sunday at 9 p.m. on the 146.640 repeater. The purpose of the net is to assist ham radio operators in preparing to respond to emergencies, test their equipment, improve operating skills, pass traffic, and to provide those with a common interest an opportunity to meet. The Apex ERC Net provides amateur radio emergency communications for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' disaster relief efforts. All stations are invited to participate in this net.

Please join us on the **Carolina 440 Net** every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. This ragchew net utilizes the Carolina 440 UHF Link Repeater System. Comprised of the Raleigh, Down East, and Coastal Wilmington link systems, there are currently 19 repeaters on the system, covering 21,168 square miles. For a list of these repeaters, please visit [www.carolina440.net](http://www.carolina440.net).

Please join us each Tuesday at 9:15 p.m. on the 146.880 repeater for the **Central Carolina SKYWARN** net. On each net there are announcements, check-ins by county, and often a program or training spot. Check us out at [www.centralcarolinaskywarn.net](http://www.centralcarolinaskywarn.net).

The **Ham Public Service Net** meets every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. and provides a forum and discussion platform for area clubs and individual hams to connect with and learn from other local hams who are interested in Ham Public Service. The HPSN is utilizing the Carolina 440 UHF Link System. The repeaters are also accessible through IRLP Reflector 9210, node 4270. The Ham Public Service North Carolina Yahoo Groups address is: [www.groups.yahoo.com/group/hpsnc](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/hpsnc).

The **PCTN (Piedmont Costal Traffic Net)** meets daily at 9 p.m. on the 146.880 repeater. The purpose of the net is to handle/pass NTS formal messages. Amateur stations are encouraged to check in and participate. The backup repeater is the 147.105 (PL tone 82.5).

The **RARS Technical & Trader's Net** is held on Saturday evenings on the 146.640 repeater at 8:00 p.m.

Join us every evening, except Saturdays, at 8 p.m. on the 146.640 repeater for the **RARS Two-Meter Net**. You can give a ragchew, check in and out (this counts for our total numbers reported to the ARRL!), make announcements, and pass traffic. We also offer National Traffic System traffic training. All licensed stations are welcome to participate in the net as often as they can. This net is also a great way to learn about amateur radio if you are newly licensed!

The **VOIP Hurricane Net** is held Sundays at 00:00 UTC on the 146.775 repeater with a tone of 88.5 (IRLP node 4260). For information about activation details, go to [www.voipwx.net](http://www.voipwx.net).

The **Wake County AUXCOMM Training Net** meets Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. on the 146.88 repeater. This net provides amateur radio operators information and training related to emergency communications and for our served agencies, such as Wake County Emergency Management. Please join us. For more information please visit <http://wake.nc.auxcomm.us/>.





# RARS Classifieds

RARS Members: [Post](#) a new 30 day listing or [Edit](#) your current listings at [www.rars.org/classifieds.php](http://www.rars.org/classifieds.php). The items below were listed within the last 30 days.

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## **Flex 5000A with Heros Tiny Preselector**

Posted February 16th, 2014

by: WA3UTC

Contact: [charlie-davis@nc.rr.com](mailto:charlie-davis@nc.rr.com)

For Sale: Flex 5000A, with factory installed 2nd Receiver, Antenna Tuner, and VU Module along with the original box.

Also as part of the package is a Heros Tiny Pre-Selector, that is supported directly by PowerSDR. The Heros Tiny Pre-Selector has been re-packaged with the standard Flex Wire support along with USB support (See Photos). The re-packaging of the device provided direct USB support and Flex Wire support.

[http://herotechnology.co.uk/pages/tiny\\_SCR\\_preselector.html](http://herotechnology.co.uk/pages/tiny_SCR_preselector.html)

All connecting cables for the Pre-Selector are included in this package as well as the Flex supplied Fire Wire cable and a PCIE TI Fire Wire card. \$3000.00 Firm, shipping included CONUS only. PayPal Only.

Contact Charlie, WA3UTC at [Charlie-davis@nc.rr.com](mailto:Charlie-davis@nc.rr.com)

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## **MFJ 407B Deluxe Electronic Keyer**

Posted February 4th, 2014

by: K4HF

Contact: [k4hf@arrl.net](mailto:k4hf@arrl.net)

The Keyer comes with the associated power 13.8VDC wall wart and manual. The current model is the D Model. Very Good condition - \$35. Contact me by E Mail or (919) 872-6555. Thanks, Chuck

## **ICOM AT-180 Auto Antenna Tuner 1.8 - 54MHz**

Posted February 3rd, 2014

by: K4HF

Contact: [k4hf@arrl.net](mailto:k4hf@arrl.net)

The AT-180 Auto Tuner was designed for use with the ICOM IC-706, IC-718 and IC-7000 Transceivers. It is rated at 120 Watts, a minimum of 8 Watts input and coax feed lines. 13.8VDC Power is obtained from the transceiver. Includes the manual and associated cables. Excellent condition. \$225. Contact me by email, preferred or (919) 872-6555. Thanks, Chuck

## Want to be a Published Writer?

Do you like building ham radio equipment? Have figured out a way to get an antenna up in a neighborhood with covenants and restrictions? Did you participate in a marathon or bike-a-thon? How about sharing your interests, knowledge, and experience with other hams in the *Exciter*? We need both technical and non-technical articles for the *Exciter*. Short or long, we'll consider just about anything amateur radio-related.



To submit an article, just email your piece to the Editor ([editor@rars.org](mailto:editor@rars.org)). Please feel free to attach any appropriate pictures or graphics. Be sure to include caption information about the images and identify the people in photographs. And always obtain their permission to use their image.

We look forward to promoting our hobby and sharing information! Break out those pens, pencils, or keyboards and get writing!

## RARS Classifieds

Want to add a new radio to your shack? Have an antenna for sale? Browse the RARS classifieds for new and used radio equipment at <http://rars.org/classifieds.php> or see p. 10 of this newsletter for current listings.

RARS members may post notices about equipment they are selling. Posts last for 30 days and are editable at any time.

Using our classifieds is a great way for buyers to search for available items and for sellers to reach a local, targeted audience.

### **From the ARRL on 06/28/2013: Phishing Scam on ARRL.net Email Addresses:**

"It has been reported by several members that someone posing as "Arrl.net Online Services" is attempting to convince members to provide personal information. These e-mails ask the user for his or her username and password. Please be advised that these e-mails are not from the ARRL. We would never ask you for this information in this fashion. The best course of action is to ignore such requests and, as a general precaution, never send personal information via e-mail."

Chuck deCourt W3WZN reports that an amateur radio operator described his experience to a Yahoo group to which Chuck belongs. This individual received an email purportedly from someone at ARRL headquarters claiming to be unable to process his payment because of an expired credit card. When the individual called the number in the signature line, twice, no one answered. He then called ARRL headquarters directly and asked to speak to the person named in the email and discovered no one by that name works there. According to this individual, the phone number listed was identical to many of the ARRL's numbers, but that extension doesn't exist. **Just be careful!**